

The First Presbyterian Church on-the-Green
Bloomfield, Essex County, New Jersey

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of New Jersey

Historic American Buildings Survey
Seymour Williams, A.I.A., District Officer
133 Central Avenue, Rahway, New Jersey

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The First Presbyterian Church on-the-Green
Bloomfield, Essex County, New Jersey

Owner: The Trustees of the First Presbyterian Church

Date of Erection: Building operations started 1797,
completed 1819; additions made
1853 and 1883

Architect: Samuel Lawrence Ward

Builder: Joshua James - superintendent construction
Aury Ward - chief mason

Present Condition: Good

Number of Stories: One with gallery and steeple

Materials of Construction: Foundation - stone

Exterior walls - brown
stone

Interior walls - wood
wainscoting 3' 6" high,
walls and ceiling plaster

Inside brick chimneys

Roof - pitch, slate

Historical Data:

In 1794 the people of the Watsession petitioned the presbytery in New York to organize a church. These petitioners were members of the Newark and Orange churches. The request was granted and in 1796 a new parish was

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constituted under the name of the First Presbyterian Church of Bloomfield. In the interim from the granting of the petition, the name of the town was changed from Watsession to Bloomfield in honor of Major Joseph Bloomfield, who later became governor of New Jersey. The old name was derived from the Indians and was said to mean elbow-like; this applied to the third river of the town which made a large elbow near its center. Previous to this services were held in the school house on Franklin Hill and in the home of Joseph Davis on Franklin Street. The later structure is still standing.

Building operations started in 1696. However, the building was not completed and furnished until 1819. Services were held in the building as early as 1799 before the windows, doors, and the permanent floors were installed. In 1853 fifteen feet was added to the north end to accommodate a new chancel. A Sunday School room was added in 1883. In 1898 to accommodate a new bell, the present cupola replaced the original one.

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Rev. Jan. 25 '37 TTW.